Media Influence and its Effects on Military Operations

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Subject Area - Operations

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Media Influence and its Effects on Military Operations

Arthur: Major Ronald D. Hahn, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: The military has not placed the proper emphasis on public affairs and a failure by the military to develop an effective public affairs campaign prior to the start of any operation could result in the compromise of operational security and/or a deterioration of public trust and confidence.

Background: The media plays an ever increasing role in shaping public opinion and thus influencing military operations as we progress into the information age . The television news media has a great deal of impact on the news decision making process which, in turn, guides what Americans view on their television screens. The media also has a great deal to do with the action viewers will take on certain issues by determining what bits of information the public will see and hear as well as what they will not see and hear. Due to the rapid increases in communications technology such as data links, satellite uplinks, and digital imagery, it is no longer practical nor possible for field commanders to conduct security reviews of reporter's video or copy. Therefore security reviews are no longer a practical means to maintain operational security or prevent the compromise of sensitive or classified information. Military field commanders face new and difficult challenges from maintaining operational security to dealing with a more demanding and technologically advanced news media. Handling these challenges will require military leaders at every level to integrate news media planning at all levels of planning. A failure to properly integrate and coordinate with news media organizations can lead to the compromise of national security, operational security, and the deterioration of public trust and confidence. Any of these failures would degrade military operations and could result in the loss of American lives.

Recommendation: The military create a seventh "Battlespace function" of Information Warfare, in which public affairs plays a major role.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Media correspondents have accompanied American soldiers into combat in every major conflict since the Revolutionary War. The American public expects to be kept informed on military operations and heavily supports media coverage of military operations. A survey conducted by the *Los Angles Times* showed that seventy-six percent of Americans polled believed media presence on the battlefield benefits the nation, and eighty-three percent considered one of the most important liberties is to be informed on events, especially when soldiers lives are at stake.[1] The media views their mission of reporting military operations to the American public just as important as the military commanders view their mission of executing the operation.

Military leaders are trained to maintain operational security and to keep details of military operations a secret. Many military leaders do not understand nor trust reporters and are extremely hesitant to release information on military operations. Lieutenant General Walter E. Boomer, Commander of Marine Forces during the Gulf War, expressed the culture of distrust between military leaders and the press: "...that among commanders there is a mythology of mistrust despite the fact that relatively few have ever had sustained contact with the news media."[2] Members of the media believe the military denies them access to the battlefield and/or censors their reports. The center of this distrust between the two institutions is a result of their direct conflict in missions. The military's mission is to win wars, and security plays an important role in achieving this mission. In contrast, the media's mission is to report up-to-date and

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[1] Survey by the "Los Angles Times", Nov 12-17, 1983. Data provided by the Roper Center

[2] Charles Ricks. *The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 1993) 6.

relevant information about any military operation. The military and the media are still reliant on one another for the accomplishment of their respective missions.

Clausewitz's defined the three essential elements necessary for successfully prosecuting a war as the government, the will of the people and the military.[3] This theory is referred to as the "Clauswitzian trinity." The media is essential for establishing and maintaining public support for any military operation. Without the will of the American people one of the three elements of the "Clauswitizian trinity" is missing and, hence, war can not be successfully prosecuted. The media is also reliant on the military to provide information, access to military leaders, and provide for their security on the battlefield. The varying levels of interdependence between the military and the media has resulted in a relationship ranging from positive to openly hostile.

The media plays an ever increasing role in shaping public opinion and thus influenceing military operations as we progress into the information age. The television news media has a great deal of influence on the news decision making process which, in turn, guides what Americans view on their television screens. The media also has a great deal to do with the action viewers will take on certain issues by determining what bits of information the public will see and hear as well as what they will not see and hear. No one can deny the power television news media has on the formation of public opinion; therefore, the importance of news selection is crucial. *FM 100-5 Operations* clearly states how the media can have a direct impact on military operations.

> In an age of instant communication, capabilities available to the media have had increasing important impacts on military operations. They serve as a conduit of information not only to the American public but also the rest of the world. Dramatic visual presentations can rapidly influence public - and therefore political - opinion so that

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[3]Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Univeristy Press, 1989) 89.

the political underpinnings of war and operations other than war may suddenly change with no prior indication to the commander in the field.[4]

This study will focus on the effects of a more aggressive media equipped with real-time communications capability on military operations. Currently the military has not placed the proper emphasis on public affairs, a critical element in the planning of any military operation. Current doctrine defines the military's "Battlespace functions" as maneuver, fires, intelligence, command and control, force protection, and logistics. The purpose of "battlespace functions" is to identify the critical areas that commanders at every level must plan and prepare for prior to any military operation. This study proposes that a seventh "Battlespace function" of *information warfare*, in which public affairs plays a major part, must be adopted. A failure by the military to develop an effective public affairs campaign prior to the start of any military operation could result in the compromise of operational security and/or a deterioration of public trust and confidence. Either case would degrade military operations and could result in the loss of American lives. As information technology continues to develop, military leaders and news media organizations must work together and understand each others' roles and missions in order to keep the American public informed while maintaining operational security.

This paper will review four major military conflicts (Vietnam, Grenada, The Gulf War, Somalia) in order to anticipate and evaluate the future of military-media relations and to determine any trends in the military-media relationship. The military employed four very different public affairs campaigns in each conflict with varying levels of success. The identification of both positive and negative trends will be vital in developing future public affairs campaigns that will allow news media organizations access to the battlefield while maintaining

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[4]*FM 100-5 Operations*. p. 1-3

good operational security. In this context, the topics to be addressed are: advances in

information technology, information warfare and how it relates to public affairs, and using the

media as a force multiplier.

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF MILITARY-MEDIA RELATIONS

Vietnam

Prior to the Vietnam War the possibility of the compromise of operational security by the media was very low. The two main mediums for news reports before Vietnam were print and film. Since the technology did not exist to transmit either medium in real-time or near real-time speed, news reports reached the public well after the battle. The development of television created two new problems for military leaders. First, along with the development of television came the ability to transmit news reports in near real-time speed thus creating a potential problem with the media compromising operational security. Second, television brought the stark images of the Vietnam War to millions of household throughout America greatly increasing the influence of the media on the American people. These two problems will only be intensified in the future by the rapid increase in information technology, America's ever increasing appetite for information, and the competitive pressures placed on reporters to cover battles as they actually happen.

The Vietnam War represented both highs and lows in military-media relations. The high point for both reporters and news organizations was the lack of censorship. Journalists were granted almost unlimited access to the battlefield. News organizations were generally limited only by the availability of military operations and transportation. In addition, they were able to send television, film, hard copy and photographic coverage of the war out unimpeded by any security review. The low point resulted in many military leaders blaming the press for negative reporting and the loss of the war. A culture of distrust between the military and the media

permeate both organizations for the next two decades greatly influencing future military-media relations.

Accreditation of reporters prior to 1965 was a mere formality. The accreditation process was left to local South Vietnamese Officials and was good for one month. However, few reporters bothered to renew their accreditation more than once due to lack of enforcement of the rules. At the end of 1965, with nearly three hundred news correspondents in South Vietnam, the Department of Defense (DoD) and Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) decided to liberalize and decentralize the accreditation process. Reporters simply had to show a valid VISA and a letter from their editor stating they worked for a bona-fide media organization. Freelance writers and photographers simply had to show a letter from a client or sign a letter stating they were responsible for their own actions.[5]

MACV and DoD adopted two different policies for monitoring television coverage of the war. DoD issued a policy statement on 17 December 1965, prohibiting the release of recognizable dead or wounded until the next of kin had been notified. Pictures of disfigured, wounded, amputees, or men in severe shock were to be withheld unless the permission of the individual involved had been obtained.[6] MACV Chief of Information opted for an informal approach. On 24 April 1966, he met with representatives from NBC, CBS, ABC, UPI News film and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer asking them to be discrete in their selections for viewing. Failure on their part might result in restricted access to the battlefield.[7]

As the war began to escalate, President Johnson's objective was to limit adverse coverage of the war to preserve public consensus for strong action in Southeast Asia. Private polls

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[5]William Hammond, *The Military and the Media 1962-1968* (Washington: GPO, 1988), 233-234.
[6]Ibid, 237.
[7]Ibid.

commissioned by the White House showed that sixty-three percent of those interviewed approved of President Johnson's handling of the war, and that sixty-six percent thought he had done everything he could to make peace.[8] While polls commissioned by the White House initially showed support for President Johnson and his handling of the war, these polls failed to show the true feeling of the American people. A group of social scientists working at Stanford university believed commercial polling organizations had failed to probe public opinion deeply enough. The group joined with the National Opinion Center at the University of Chicago to interview a carefully selected cross-section of the American public. They found that while a majority of Americans approved of the President's handling of the conflict, the same majority also favored de-escalation. Eighty percent of those polled were willing to bargain with the Viet Cong, seventy percent favored free elections in south Vietnam even if the Viet Cong should win, and fifty-two percent were prepared to accept a coalition government that included communism.[9] Many military officers blamed the media for the loss of public support which only served to further the gap between the military and the media.

William Hammond's book *The Military and the Media 1962-68* suggest that many of the senior military leaders shared General Westmoreland's contempt for the media and, as a result, most military leaders ignored the media for the most part. Although the media was virtually uncensored, in contrast, military press releases were heavily scrutinized to portray a favorable view of the war. As stated earlier, President Johnson felt it vital to create public support for the escalation of the war.[10] President Johnson urged General Westmoreland to speak at an April 1968 luncheon hosted by the AP Managing Editors Association. The President felt it would be a

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[8]Ibid, 227.

[9]Ibid, 228.

[10]*The Military and the Media*, 227.

good forum to explain the values at stake in Southeast Asia and to assist in bringing domestic public opinion in line with the administration.[11] General Westmoreland declined to speak, stating that with the end of the rainy season in Vietnam his presence would be required in country.[12] General Westmoreland's reluctance to help sell the war to the American people demonstrates the negative command climate towards the news media. This negative attitude would only intensify as the war progressed, and news reports began to question the United States' ability to win the war.

Bruce Andrew's book, *Public Constraint and American Policy in Vietnam*, argues that the media was not responsible for loss of public support in the Vietnam War. Press releases and information provided by MACV were often overly optimistic, and frequently they directly contradicted reports from both the news media and governmental intelligence reports. Brigadier General Winant Sidle, MACV Chief of Information, expressed his concerns over the military's lack of creditability with the media in a memo to General Westmoreland dated 11 September 1967: "...convinced that we have not been telling the whole truth, ...that we tend to be overly optimistic, and therefore our talk of progress at the present must be taken with a large grain of salt."[13]

The ultimate contradiction between the military and the media occurred immediately following the Tet Offensive in January 1968. Although, General Westmoreland was planning for an offensive operation by the North Vietnamese, the size and coordination of the attack caught both U.S. and South Vietnamese forces by surprise. At a news conference General Westmoreland was asked by CBS News correspondent Robert Schakne how the general assessed the situation. Westmoreland implied the enemy had suffered a great defeat: "In my opinion, this is diversionary to his main efforts which he had planned to take place in Quang Tri Province, from Laos toward Khe Sanh and across the DMZ...Now yesterday the enemy exposed himself by

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[11]Ibid, 229.
[12]Ibid.
[13]*The Military and the Media 1962-1968*, 320.

virtue of this strategy, and he suffered great casualties."[14] Numerous military correspondents

present at the press conference were baffled by General Westmoreland's comments.[15] "How

could any effort against Saigon, especially downtown Saigon, be a diversion?"[16] The preceding

comment by Peter Braestrup of the *Washington Post* summed up the feeling of disbelief many

reporters felt following General Westmoreland's comments on the CBS Morning News.

Negative news stories began almost immediately following the offensive.[17] William

Hammond's book cites numerous news reports from both television and the print media which

portrayed a very grim picture of the war effort. One such report was from CBS News

correspondent Mike Wallace who, in a television report, stated the Tet Offensive had:

"demolished the myth that allied strength controlled South Vietnam."[18] Some polls showed

support for the war had dropped by almost two-thirds following the Tet Offensive.[19]

The public affairs campaign during the Vietnam War proved to be disastrous in three

main areas. First, the government did a poor job selling the war to the American public. Second,

although the media was uncensored, MACV did a poor job of establishing an effective working

relationship with the media. Third, overly optimistic reports on the progress of the war resulted

in a lack of creditability first with the news media and then, ultimately, the American public.

As of late 1964, Vietnam ranked only thirteenth on the public list of concerns, and almost

two-thirds of Gallup Poll's respondents claimed to have paid little or no attention to what was

happening there.[20] Bruce Anderson's book, *Public Constraint and American Policy in Vietnam*,

cites polls which further demonstrate the erosion of confidence by the American public for a

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[14]Original quote from Westmoreland's comment from CBS Morning News, 1 Feb 68.

[15]*The Military and the Media 1962-1968*, 345.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid, 320.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Bruce Andrews, *Public Constraint and American Policy in Vietnam* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976), 29.

[20]L.A. Free and H. Cantrill, *The Political Beliefs of Americans* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968), 59-60.

successful conclusion to the war. A survey asked people to agree or disagree with the following

statement: "Political leaders shouldn't think so much in international terms but concentrate more

on our own national problems and building up our strength and prosperity here at home."[21] This

survey showed a steady rise in positive answers from 1964 (55%) to 1968 (60%) to 1971, when

77% agreed and only 16% disagreed.[22] The negative trend of these polls clearly reflects the

declining commitment of the American people for the war.

The lack of cooperation between the military and the media often resulted in news

reporters with little or no military experience having to interpret military press releases and

unclassified intelligence reports. The following example from William Hammond's book, *The

Military and the Media 1962-1968*, clearly demonstrates this point.

> The reports also tended to mislead the press. In the measurement used by the
> command, if a unit lost up to 5 percent of its members, casualties were announced
> as light. Losses from 6 to 15 percent were moderate and those above that heavy.
> Understood in context, the expressions were generally descriptive of a day's combat.
> Yet, since most reporters had little knowledge of the size of the units involved in
> particular actions, eight-column headlines reporting heavy U.S. casualties sometimes
> appeared when only a platoon had been involved and ten men wounded. The result
> was a needless distortion of the war.[23]

Clearly, the most damaging public affairs mistake was the overly optimistic press

releases on the progress of the war. This is best summed up in *Newsmen and National Defense*:

> The Johnson Administration responded to the tensions that resulted by using
> all the facilities of the government and military services to mount public relations
> campaigns to demonstrate that the South Vietnamese armed forces were effective,
> that programs to win the hearts and minds of the country's peasantry were working,
> and that the American effort was indeed making progress. The news media
> replayed those themes, but each official statement of optimism seemed to have a
> pessimistic counterpart and each statistic showing progress an equally convincing
> opposite. Those ambiguities found their way into press sentiment as well, and into

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[21]*Public Constraint and American Policy in Vietnam,* 42.

[22]Ibid.

[23]*The Military and the Media 1962-1968*, 283.

the nightly briefing for the Saigon correspondents, which soon became known to reporters and public affairs officers alike as "The Five O-Clock Follies."[24]

The failure by the military to develop an effective public affairs plan during the Vietnam War resulted in the deterioration of public trust and confidence and subsequently resulted in a lack of public support for the war. The lack of understanding between the two organizations would have a great impact on future military-media relations.

Grenada

Although the 1983 invasion of Grenada was by most military standards a minor conflict, it would have a dramatic impact on the military-media relationship for a decade. In response to the belief that the media was responsible the loss of public support during the Vietnam War, the media was completely excluded during the initial invasion of Grenada. It would be over two days before reporters were provided access to the battlefield.[25] The reasons for excluding the media ranged from operational security concerns to the limited planning time given for the operation.[26] However, many media organizations believed it was simply an attempt to restrict access to the battlefield by the military.[27] Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, stated the decision to exclude news media was made by the military, and that a civilian Secretary and President "would not dream" of overruling decisions made by admirals and generals.[28]

The *Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today* summed up the media's attack on the U.S. Government:

> The major U.S. media and professional associations demanded that the U.S. Government (and more specifically, the military) accommodate the press in 'wartime' situations. Their rationale was twofold. They first claimed that the

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[24]Lloyd Matthews, ed., *Newsmen and National Defense: Is Conflict Inevitable?* (McLean: Brassey's, 1991) 13.

[25]U.S. Army War College, *The Trouble Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today* (Strategic Studies Institute, 1996) 1.

[26]Joseph Metcalf III, *The Press and Grenada, 1983*, ed. Peter Young (London: Cass & CO, 1991) 169.

[27]*The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today*, 42.

[28]Peter Dunn and Bruce Watson, ed., *American Intervention in Grenada: The Implications of Operation "Urgent Fury"* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985) 122.

press had always been present whenever U.S. troops had been involved in combat operations around the world, even when high stakes and great danger were involved. Second, the press argued that the tradition of journalists accompanying soldiers on the battlefield was a key pillar of American democracy and media presence serves the people's right to know. The essence of this argument is that the tradition of free press had made the United States of America one of the strongest nations in the world, and there was no need to change it."[29]

These complaints were outlined in "Statement of Principle on Press Access to Military Operations, Washington, DC: January 1984," a report co-authored by numerous media organizations.[30]

Additionally, two lawsuits were filed against the Department of Defense by news organizations following the invasion of Grenada. The first was filed by publisher Larry Flynt challenging the constitutionality of the press ban during the invasion.[31] The second suit was filed by ten magazines led by *The Nation*. Their argument claimed "the press has a First Amendment right to unlimited access to a foreign arena in which American military forces are engaged." The suit also argued the Department of Defense's use of "pools," which limited access to the battlefield and the number of reporters granted access, infringed on their First Amendment rights. The Grenada invasion was the military's first operation to use media "pools" and the use of media "pools" would become a main stay in future military operations. Since both suits were filed well after the conclusion of the invasion of Grenada, the suits were considered null and void and both cases were dismissed.[32]

The Most significant evolution following Grenada was the formation of the "Sidle Panel." The panel was established to respond to the numerous complaints made by the media and to review military-media relations. The panel was headed by Major General Sidle, USA (Ret), and consisted of both public affairs officers and media personnel. The two main findings of the panel were to include public affairs during the initial planning stages of any military

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[29]Ibid, 2.

[30]*The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today*, 2.

[31]Ibid, 3.

[32]Ibid.

operation and to use media "pools" for granting access to the battlefield.[33]   As a result of the

Sidle Panel, on Sept 10, 1984, the DoD established the Department of Defense National News

Media Pool (DoDNMP), which was designed to ensure media coverage during the early stages

of a military operation. DoDNMP was based on the following five principles.[34]

1. Noncompetitive pool (all news organizations share information)
2. Reporters obey escort's orders
3. Reporters cannot directly communicate with their organizations; they must file via military communications equipment.
4. All reports are subject to security review.
5. Reporters must follow ground rules and guidelines.

Many military leaders thought DoDNMP would relieve them of the responsibility of

dealing with the press; this vital flaw became evident in U.S. military operations in Panama. The

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Colin Powell, issued a message to his

major military commanders stressing the importance of planning for media coverage during

military operations.[35] The following excerpt is from General Powell's message to his

commanders.

> Commanders are reminded that the media aspects of military operations are important...and warrant your personal attention. ...Media coverage and pool support requirements must be planned simultaneously with operational plans and should address all aspects of operational activity, including direct combat, media, prisoner-of-war, refugee, equipment repair, refueling and rearming, civic action, and stabilization activities. Public Affairs annexes should receive command attention when formulating and reviewing all such plans.[36]

The use of media pools would play a large role in the military-media relationship during the

Persian Gulf War.

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[33]Report of the CJCS Military-Media Relations Panel (Sidle Panel). Washington: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1984.

[34]*The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today*, 7.

[35]Frank Aukofer and William Lawrence, *Americas Team the Odd Couple* (Nashville: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995) 44.

[36]Ibid, 45.

Although the public affairs policy during the invasion of Grenada was exactly opposite the approach taken during the Vietnam War, the military still made the same two critical mistakes. First, an effective public affairs plan was not developed prior to the execution of the operation. Second, the military did not successfully coordinate with the media. As a result, distrust of both the government and the military was elevated in the eyes of the media. This apparent distrust is reflected in the type of stories printed and aired on television and can potentially break down the public's trust and confidence in the military.

The Gulf War

Determined not to repeat the mistakes made during the Vietnam War, the United States Government developed a massive propaganda campaign to sell the Gulf War to both the media and the American public. President Bush himself had promised repeatedly that this would not be "another Vietnam", and, as a result, public opinion had an overriding influence in policy decisions regarding the war.[37] The first step in selling the war to the American people was to demonize Saddam Hussein. Pentagon officials, who four months earlier had portrayed Saddam Hussein as a normal Middle Eastern dictator despite his use of chemical weapons, were now comparing him to Adolf Hitler.[38]

John MacArthur's book, *Second Front*, makes an interesting point regarding the use of propaganda to build political support for the war. On December 19, 1990, Amnesty International released an eighty-four page report on human rights violations in Kuwait. Page fifty-seven of the report outlined details of how Iraqi forces had left more than three hundred premature babies to die by taking their incubators.[39] Despite evidence contradicting the baby incubator story, on January 8, 1991, John Healey, Amnesty's U.S. executive director, testified to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs regarding the story. Capitalizing on John Healey's testimony,

[37]Susan Jeffords and Laruren Rabinovitz, ed., *Seeing Through the Media the Persian Gulf War* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1994) 20.

[38]John MacArthur, *Second Front* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992) 69.

[39]Ibid, 66.

President Bush on January 9, included the story in a letter to college students that was sent to campus newspapers throughout the country. The following text is an excerpt from that letter.

> The terror Saddam Hussein has imposed upon Kuwait violates every principle of human decency. Listen to what Amnesty International has documented. "Widespread abuses of human rights have been perpetrated by Iraqi forces... arbitrary arrest and detention without trial of thousands...widespread torture... imposition of the death penalty and the extrajudicial execution of hundreds of unarmed civilians, including children...
>
> There's no horror that could make this a more obvious conflict of good vs. evil... Each day that passes means another day for Iraq's forces to dig deeper into their stolen land. Another day Saddam Hussein can work toward building his nuclear arsenal and perfecting his chemical and biological weapons capability. Another day of atrocities for Amnesty International to document...[40]

MacArthur raises the following question: without the media's cooperation and willingness to repeatedly state the Hitler analogy, would the war resolution have passed the Senate. The baby incubator story was essential for getting the press to go along with the Hitler analogy. The war resolution vote was taken in the Senate, on January 12, 1991, where the resolution passed by five-votes. Ten senators either specifically cited the baby incubator story or referenced the Amnesty report in general.[41]

MacArthur argues the U.S. government manipulated the press to help win public support for a war with Iraq. The author, points out Saddam Hussein was responsible for almost one hundred and fifty thousand Iranian deaths with support from three U.S. Administrations. He further suggests human loss of life was never a motivating factor for U.S. involvement, only the threat to Southwest Asia (SWA) oil reserves. Few would argue the threat to SWA oil reserves was not a primary concern for the United States, but the real question is, was the media manipulated by the U.S. government to win public support for the war with Iraq. Whether manipulated or not, the press did an effective job of demonizing Saddam. Statements such as the

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[40]Ibid, 77.

[41]Ibid.

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one that appeared in Newsweek on January 7, 1991 were typical of how the U.S. media portrayed Saddam Hussein.

> **THE THUG**: To anyone who crosses him at home, Saddam is a ruthless tyrant. He rose through Iraq's ruling Baath party as a jailer, torturer and assassin. Since 1979 he has wielded power savagely-dropping poison gas on rebellious Kurds, killing countless political rivals and even reportedly executing his own brother-in-law.[42]

In a three sentence paragraph, look at the adjectives used to describe Saddam: thug, ruthless tyrant, jailer, torturer, assassin and savage.

The attitudes towards the U.S. government and the military's handling of the press during the Gulf War vary dramatically. Frank Aukofer and William Lawrence's book, *America's Team, the Odd Couple*, argues that during the six month buildup prior to the start of the Gulf War, the military and the press worked very closely to allow for the most comprehensive media coverage of the war as possible. The authors do acknowledge that "Nevertheless, there were lingering attitude problems within elements of the military which prevented the Gulf War coverage from being as good as it should have been. Once again, news-organization leaders voiced strong criticism of the military's treatment of the media."[43] MacArthur argues the U.S. government had no intention of allowing complete coverage of the Gulf War: "From the moment Bush committed troops to Saudi Arabia on Aug 7, 1990, the administration never intended to allow the press to cover the war in the Persian Gulf in any real sense."[44]

The U.S. government and the military received strong criticism from news organizations following the Gulf War, yet few media organizations were willing to openly criticize either the government or the military during the war due to strong support for the war by the American public. Retired Air Force General Perry Smith's book, *How CNN Fought the War*, brings up a very important point. Because of Saddam Hussein's inhumane acts which included rape, murder of Kuwaiti civilians, and the horrendous environmental acts of setting the oil wells and refineries

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[42]Peter McGrath and Ray Wilkinson, "Saddam's End Game," *Newsweek* 7 Jan. 1991: 21.

[43]*Americas Team the Odd Couple*, 45.

[44]*Second Front*, 5.

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on fire, the press was able to blame and criticize Saddam Hussein. However, due to the effectiveness of the U.S. military and the other members of the Coalition in prosecuting the war, it was very difficult to criticize the senior leadership of the United States. As General Smith puts it: "...when it came to criticizing the United Nations, members of the Coalition, the President of the United States, the military and its conduct of the war, the press hadn't much critical meat to chew on."[45]

The major complaint of most news media organizations was over the use of media pools and the restrictions the pools placed on reporters' access to the battlefield. John MacArthur's book, *Second Front*, argues that the policy of using escorted media pools was to deliberately confine reporters, thus restricting when and how they could talk to troops in the field.[46] MacArthur does not only blame the government, but also criticizes the media's acceptance of the pools by presenting a statement made by Stanely Cloud of *Time* magazine: "Throughout the long evolution of the DoD pool, the press willingly, passively, and stupidly went along with it. That is the original sin which got us here, and I don't blame anybody as much as I blame us."[47]

The U.S. Military's Joint Information Bureau (JIB), in Dhahran, determined the number of slots available to reporters to go out into the field each day. Although many news organizations understood the necessity for the use of pools no matter how distasteful, there was one rule which most journalist considered sacred. News organizations themselves determined who filled the pool slots. However, this rule was broken by General Schwarzkopf and others to make room for reporters who's stories they favored.[48] John Fialka sums up the damage created by favoring certain journalists in his book, *Hotel Warriors Covering the Gulf War:* "The pool system which had taken months of negotiation between the Pentagon and Washington Bureau

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[45]Perry Smith, *How CNN Fought the War* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991) 181.

[46]*Second Front*, 7.

[47]Ibid, 35-36.

[48]John Fialka, *Hotel Warriors Covering the Gulf War* (Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1992) 34-35.

chiefs attempting to ensure fair access to the battlefield had been subverted with an imperial handshake."[49]

Relying on the JIB to determine the number of slots available to gain access, the battlefield reporters had to send their copy through the JIB to get transmitted back to their particular news organizations. Many complained the military simply censored their copy by delaying its transmission to the point where the story was no longer timely. Again, many reporters felt certain journalist's copy had been given priority in transmission and literally bypassed the JIB altogether. One such example, the report of Mr. Galloway, a long time acquaintance of General Schwarzkopf who's copy received special handling. Mr. Galloway describes in his own words how his copy was sent: "An officer who shall go nameless faxed all my copy and sent it to a satellite point where it went to my office."[50] Bypassing the JIB provided Mr. Galloway with a competitive advantage by helping get his stories to print quicker than other news reporters whose stories had to be routed through the JIB.

One of the main reasons military leaders supported the use of pools was to have some control over the movements of the press; it was easier to provide for the physical security of the reporters. A case in point in support of this argument is the capture of Bob Simon, of CBS TV, by Iraqi forces. Simon was operating outside the procedures established for the news media and conducting reporting on his own when he was captured. Such independent actions reinforce the military's concern of providing security for reporters if they are not allowed to control their movement around the battlefield. General Boomer, Commander of Marine Forces during the Gulf War, commented on the problems created by reporters who are free to wander the battlefield: "You cannot have people wandering around on the battlefield on their own. It's not fair to the soldiers. You can say we'll take care of our own, but you can't. The marines will wind up having to provide protection and in combat we don't have time to do that."[51]

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[49]Ibid, 34.

[50]Ibid.

[51]*Hotel Warriors Covering the Gulf War,* 60-61.

The following statement by Joseph Lelyveld, managing editor of the New York Times, demonstrates not all media personnel believe they should have unlimited access to the battlefield: "The First Amendment gives us the right to publish just about anything. It doesn't give us the right to go just about anywhere."[52] As the battlefield expands, and the threat to rear areas increases, military units simply will not have the personnel to provide protection for media personnel to wander the battlefield. In future conflicts U.S. military units will most likely be part of an international coalition force, which means both American and international news agencies will be covering the conflict. This creates additional problems for military leaders ranging from language barriers to verifying clearance requirements and press credentials.

Another concern to General Boomer during the Gulf War was the number of reporters who had little to no understanding of the military or military operations. As General Boomer puts it: "It shouldn't be amateur night at the follies as far as combat correspondents are concerned."[53] However, because the two organizations generally have very little dealings with each other except during crises or war there are very few reporters who specialize in military and national security issues. Consequently their numbers are decreasing as the trend continues toward reporters with "general" expertise. Further, most reporters don't have the time or support to visit and learn about the military, even during exercises.[54] Additionally, since the end of the draft there are fewer and fewer personnel throughout news media organizations with any military experience. This trend will continue with time, since many media personnel who were drafted during the Vietnam War are now reaching retirement age.

One of the biggest controversies regarding media coverage of the Gulf War were the reports of Peter Arnett from Baghdad after the Iraqi Government had forced all other reporters out of Iraq. Robert Wiener, CNN producer in Baghdad, was able to convince Iraqi officials to allow Peter Arnett to stay based on two main principles. First, that CNN was well known and

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[52]*Second Front*, 34.

[53]Ibid.

[54]*The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward,* 6.

second CNN was considered international.[55]   Although Arnett was permitted to report from

Baghdad, all of his reports were heavily censored by Iraq. CNN's initial failure to report Arnett's

broadcast were censored by the Iraqi government created a creditability problem for both CNN

and Peter Arnett.

Two of Arnett's stories received heavy criticism from both the public and political

leaders. First, Arnett interviewed an American peace activist who was sharply critical of the

U.S. policy in Iraq. Second, he interviewed Ramsey Clark, a former attorney general of the

United States. Clark had just returned from Basra and stated he saw no military targets hit but

reported lots of damage, death and destruction to civilians.[56] Senator Alan Simpson of

Wyoming labeled Arnett a "sympathizer", and NBC military analyst Harry Summers even

suggested that he may be guilty of treason.[57]Another Arnett story which received heavy

criticism was the bombing of the so-called "baby milk factory". However, Arnett did note the

baby milk factory sign was written in English questioning the validity of the Iraqi's claim the

structure was a milk factory and not a command and control bunker as stated by the United

States. Smith's book, *How CNN Fought the War*, cited CNN viewer mail was most critical over

Peter Arnett's reporting from Baghdad. Creditability is the key issue for both the military and the

media and a loss of creditability by either organization can compromise the public's trust and

confidence in that institution.

The Gulf War received almost nonstop television coverage, compared to Vietnam which

received an average of only three minutes per network per day.[58] As a result of the nonstop

coverage, most Americans felt the media reporting of the war was more than adequate and

viewed the U.S. government and military reporting was both creditable and comprehensive.[59]

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[55]*How CNN Fought the War,* 31.

[56]Ibid, 32.

[57]Ibid, 34.

[58]According to George Bailey who wrote, "Interpretive Reporting of the Vietnam War by Anchormen." in *Journalism Quarterly* 53 (1976): 319-323, Vietnam news, both film stories and anchormen copy, totaled about 184 hours for the five year period on all three networks.

[59]This statement was based on viewer mail received by CNN and reported in *How CNN Fought the War*.

Part of the success of the military reporting was due to the effective use of the military brief's in both Saudi Arabia and the Pentagon. However, initially the military briefings were not very successful, as pointed out by Major General Smith.

> In the first few days of the war, the briefs were unimpressive. Some were not forthcoming with information; others were very nervous in front of the cameras; and some totally refused to answer questions. Within the first week of the war, the senior leadership in the Pentagon and in Saudi Arabia substituted other officers who gave these military briefings quite well, seemed comfortable with the press, and were attractive to most viewers.[60]

By replacing the military briefers at both the Pentagon and in Saudi Arabia, DoD demonstrated the concern by senior military officials for establishing an effective public affairs campaign during the Gulf War.

Prior to the start of combat operations in the Gulf War, the media was highly skeptical of the high technology weapons and precision guided munitions (PGMs). Numerous articles appeared stating that U.S. PGMs would be unreliable under combat conditions. An article in the *New York Times* appeared on January 23, 1991 stating U.S. high technology weapons would not work in the Gulf.[61] However, within a few days of the start of the war it was clear that high technology weapons were working extremely well. Dramatic strike camera footage vividly demonstrated the accuracy and destructive power of the U.S. delivered PGMs. CNN military analyst Major General Perry Smith, USAF (Ret), stated: "Most of the television audience was impressed and in many cases, astounded by this precision."[62] The release of the strike camera footage combined with the effective military press briefings at both the Pentagon and in Saudi Arabia built a tremendous amount of public confidence in the U.S. military.

Despite the high marks given by the public on the reporting of the Gulf War, most news organizations felt the use of the DoD pools and military censorship severely restricted their

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[60]*How CNN Fought the War*, 75.

[61]R.W. Apple, "Heuy's and Scuds: Vietnam and the Gulf are Wars Apart," *New York Times,* 23 Jan 1991.

[62]*How CNN Fought the War*, 24-25.

ability to provide full coverage of the war. In a letter to Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, several major news organizations complained about the media policies employed during the Gulf War.

> Our sense is that virtually all major news organizations agree that the flow of information to the public was blocked, impeded or diminished by the policies and practices of the DoD. Pools did not work, stories and pictures were late or lost. Access to the men and women in the field was interfered with by a needless system of military escorts and security review. These conditions meant that we could not tell the public the full story of those who fought the nation's battles.[63]

While some of the arguments presented in the letter are invalid, the method of transmitting reporters' stories from the field to the press center was in some cases completely inadequate. In some U.S. Army units, reporters' copy had to been driven to rear areas for subsequent transmission to the press center. This delay frequently got stories cut by deadline-driven editors and, consequently, generated bad feelings between the Army and reporters covering those units.[64]

Conversely, Lieutenant General Walter Boomer, Commanding General of Marine forces in the Gulf, who had previously headed the Marine Corps Public Affairs Branch, went out of his way to assist the press. General Boomer utilized Marine Corps computer assets to electronically send reporters stories to the press center greatly reducing the transmission time and helping the reporters covering the Marine units meet their editors deadlines. Additionally, he ensured reporters were given almost complete access to both Marine field commanders and their troops. As a result of the outstanding relationship developed between the Marine Corps and the news organizations covering Marine units, the Marine Corps received an inordinate amount of positive press coverage. The press coverage received by the Marine Corps during the Gulf War acted as a "force multiplier" by keeping Marines motivated and keeping U.S. and world opinion firmly behind the Marine Corps.[65]

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[63]*The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today*, 3.
[64]Frank Stech, "Winning CNN Wars," *PARAMETERS* Autumn (1994): 44.
[65]Ibid.

Due to strong criticism from news media organizations regarding the military's treatment of the press during the Gulf War, these organizations and the Pentagon worked together to develop the *DoD Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations*.[66] The new DoD principles varied very little from the principles employed during the Gulf War. The main point of the new principles was to emphasize to military commanders the importance of their personal involvement in planning for news coverage of combat operations. The *DoD Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations* does not abolish the use of media pools or exempt news photos, print copy or stories from security review. Abolishing media pools and security reviews were the two main goals of news media organizations.

Their are four main learning points from the Gulf War for improving military-media relations. First, an effective public affairs campaign must be planned prior to the start of combat operations to gain the support of the American public. The Bush Administration was extremely effective in building support for the Gulf War prior to actual combat operations. The support from the American people was unwavering. Saddam Hussein's filming of Coalition POW's was an attempt to break American public support for the war. This tactic was not only ineffective but actually increased American resolve to win the war.

Second, incorporate the press throughout the operational planning process at all levels, and make both the field commanders and troops accessible. By failing to properly coordinate and work with the media, the U.S. Army missed out on an opportunity to receive the positive press coverage they deserved for their outstanding performance in desert warfare. On the other hand, the U.S. Marine Corps received more favorable press than probably deserved as a direct result of General Boomer ensuring the media received the proper command attention to assure they had both access to the Marines and the assets to get their copy to press.

Third, pools of some sort will still be necessary to maintain both operational security and provide the necessary physical security for media personnel. If reporters are simply allowed to

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[66]Complete copy of the *DoD Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations* is printed in Annex A.

roam the battlefield it will be impossible for the military to provide for their security.

Additionally, soldiers would be required to conduct search and rescue missions for missing or

possibly captured reporters. This would put both the soldiers in unnecessary danger as well

divert them from their real mission of winning the nation's battles. As a result of an effective

public affairs campaign, the military maintained the trust and confidence of the American people

without compromising operational security.

Fourth, in future military operations the number of media personnel wanting access to

cover military operations will exceed the number the military can support. Therefore, as in

Desert Storm, the media will have to establish some criteria to determine who fills the available

slots getting access to the battlefield, field commanders, and troops. In order to maintain

creditability with the news media the military must avoid giving preferential treatment to

individual news reporters or allowing them to bypass normal channels for getting access to the

battlefield.

Somalia

The constant media coverage of the famine in Somalia and the resulting public outrage

resulted in the U.S. committing the military to support the United Nations in its humanitarian

effort to feed the people of Somalia. In an attempt to improve military/media relations, senior

military commanders were personally involved in the media planning for Somalia.[67]

Additionally, the Pentagon ensured news media organizations were kept completely informed of

all military plans in Somalia. The plan backfired when the Marines landed at Mogadishu, on 9

December 1992, amidst the lights of television cameras and the flash of photographers cameras.

The media knowing the exact position of the Marine landing was a severe violation of

operational security and put the lives of both military and media personnel at risk.

Media pools were not utilized in Somalia as a result of the media complaints following

the Gulf War. Reporters had uncontrolled access to the battlefield which created numerous

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[67]*America's Team the Odd Couple*, 45.

problems for the military. The problems ranged from maintaining operational security to providing logistical support for media personnel. The following statement from Lieutenant Colonel Stokes, Marine Forces Public Affairs Officer (PAO), reflects the lack of control over the media.

> ...when I first arrived here, media were every where. I mean, you didn't provide them access to your units, they just went and talked to anybody and everybody they wanted to talk to, and most of the commanders were their own PAO's...and again it was our effort to try to get some grasp on this large group of people who were sort of running everywhere across the country."[68]

Dealing with the foreign press proved to be even more difficult: "What we found is most of our U.S. based press were fairly easy to deal with; it was some of the foreign press that we had more difficulty dealing with because they don't feel driven by our laws or rules or our regulations."[69]

Media coverage of the terrible conditions in Somalia lead to a public outcry for U.S. intervention, and the television footage of a U.S. Army Ranger being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu lead to a public outcry for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia. Although militarily insignificant, the American public was not properly prepared for the stark images of its soldiers being killed on the six o'clock news. From start to finish the media had a tremendous amount of influence on the U.S. intervention in Somalia.

The public affairs campaign employed during Operation Restore Hope failed in several areas. First, the mission of the U.S. forces was unclear to the American people; therefore, the American public was not prepared for American casualties. Second, operational security was not maintained as evidenced by the filming of the Marines' landing at Mogadishu.   Third, the military did not anticipate the number of reporters covering the operation. Additionally, without any restrictions placed on media personnel, field commanders were put in the difficult position of having to manage and in some cases provide logistical support for the masses of reporters following U.S. forces throughout Somalia. Although the media registered few complaints with their treatment from the military in Somalia, the public affairs campaign was ineffective and

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[68]Lieutenant Colonel Stokes, personal interview, 25 Jan. 1993.

[69]Ibid.

resulted in a compromise of operational security and a deterioration of public trust and

confidence in Operation Restore Hope resulting in the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia.

CHAPTER 3

MILITARY/MEDIA TRENDS

A careful analysis of the four previously mentioned conflicts reveals some critical enduring factors and emerging trends for developing an effective public affairs campaign. First, the American public has to understand the mission and the need for military force prior to committing military units in combat. If the American public does not have the resolve to sustain the casualties necessary to win the conflict, no matter how effective the military operation, it will ultimately result in failure.

The Vietnam War was initially supported by the American people; however, the government and the military were overly optimistic in stating the requirements necessary to win. As a result both the government and the military lacked the creditability to maintain the trust and confidence of the American people; subsequently support for the war quickly eroded. The role of U.S. military forces in Somalia changed very quickly from that of humanitarian relief provider to combat missions attempting to capture "warlords". The American people were not clear on the role or mission of the U.S. forces in Somalia and, subsequently, were not prepared to accept American casualties. As stated previously, the graphic images of a U.S. Army Ranger being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu brought about an immediate backlash from the American people for the withdrawal of U.S. troops. In contrast, when Iraq showed video footage of beaten Coalition POW's during the Gulf War, support for the war remained high. The American people understood the mission of the military and the need for force and, subsequently, were prepared to accept American casualties.

The military must communicate with the public in order to maintain creditability, as well as establish the trust and confidence of the American people. The key is honest communications. Either not communicating or reporting incorrect information will quickly erode public trust and confidence. This is true in both war and peace. Recent scandals such as the Kelly Flynn incident, where the military refused to communicate with the public, created a perception of mistrust from both the news media as well as the public. In order to communicate effectively

with the public, the military must coordinate and cooperate with the news media. The lack of cooperation between the military and the media in both Vietnam and Grenada helped create a perception of mistrust which was then translated to the American public in the news reports and stories generated by the media. Kenneth Bacon, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Relations, addresses this very issue.

> I think we're finding all over the world now that leaders watch CNN and they understand that it's worth their while to invite the media in to cover things because they can influence the media. And sometimes they're more adept at influencing it than the military is. Let's face it, it's a battle of perceptions."[70]

The number of reporters covering military operations and the associated tasks with providing for their security and logistical support will intensify and stress military resources. Controls must be in place in order to maintain operational security as well as provide for the support and security of media personnel covering military operations. *FM 100-6 Information Warfare* clearly states the increasing demands of the media on military commanders.

> The role of the news media will continue to expand. The number of news organizations and their means to gather, process, and disseminate information is increasing exponentially. From the 147 reporters who accompanied the D-Day invasion in WW-II, to the 800-plus reporters in Panama during Just Cause, to the 1,300 reporters in the Kuwaiti theater in Desert Storm. The ability and desire of the news media to cover U.S. military operations is a given. Like wise, the demand by the U.S. and international public to know what is happening, consistent with security and propriety, is also a given.[71]

The problems in Somalia resulted from giving too much information to the press and placing no controls on the news media and then expecting field commanders to handle both U.S. and International news organizations with no tools to control the influx of reporters. Former Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, accurately describes the problems associated with expecting the press to police themselves regarding security issues.

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[70]*America's Team the Odd Couple*, 93. Original quote taken from personal interview on 30 Nov. 1994.
[71]*FM 100-6 Information Warfare*, 1-3.

I wouldn't trust the press in a pre-invasion situation where secrecy is essential. The problem is, is that 99 percent will be trustworthy, and one percent isn't. Then it's out, and once it's out, it's out. And it wasn't 50 percent of the press that put it out; it was maybe one percent. And it may not be deliberate. It just may be an accident.
...This is why I wouldn't try and take them into my confidence. I don't think they have the sensitivity about what is secret and what isn't. Your asking a lot, for a person to say, "Look, I've got this great story , but I can't run with it because it would damage national security." The rationale for every reporter to go with the story is that someone else is going with it.[72]

As information technology continues to develop it is absolutely critical for military leaders to cooperate and coordinate with news media organizations, while developing the necessary controls to prevent the compromise of operational security. The future will bring the availability of satellite communications to most news organizations , therefore military security reviews of media copy, whether written or televised, will be virtually impossible. Historically the media has relied on the military to provide transportation to the battlefield. Hence the military could exercise some control over the media by controlling their access to the battlefield. News organizations are continuing to expand their capabilities and in future conflict they may provide their own transportation to the battlefield thereby bypassing the military altogether. Other measures of insuring operational security will need to be developed.

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[72]*America's Team the Odd Couple*, 91. Original quote taken from personal interview on 26 Jan. 1995.

CHAPTER 4

INFORMATION WARFARE

<u>Information Warfare as a Battlespace Function</u>

The sudden withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia due to the filming of an Army Ranger being dragged through the streets did not go unnoticed by potential enemies of the United States. Both Vietnam and Somalia demonstrate that U.S. forces can be forced to withdraw without defeating them militarily.   The Gulf War demonstrated the combat power of the U.S. military, and it is highly unlikely that future adversaries will choose to fight the U.S. force on force. However, without the support of the American people the U.S. military is powerless, and it is on this front that our future adversaries will choose to fight. As we enter the Information Age, a new battlespace has developed in a realm referred to as the Global Information Environment (GIE). The following excerpt from *FM 100-6 Information Operations* defines and describes the importance of GIE.

> Commanders and their staffs operating in the Information Age face an increasingly complex environment. Commanders and staffs at all levels will encounter an expanding information domain termed the "Global Information Environment" (GIE). The GIE contains those information processes and systems that are beyond the direct influence of the military or even the National Command Authority (NCA), but nevertheless may directly impact the success or failure of military operations. The media, international organizations, and even individuals represent a partial list of GIE players.[73]

FM 100-6 Information Operations identifies information or GIE as a major influence on operations at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. Additionally, information must be successfully integrated across the full range of military operations in order to enhance the elements of combat power.[74] Commander George Kraus's article, "Information Warfare in 2015", gives an excellent explanation of why information warfare must be looked at as a separate Battlespace Function.

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[73]*FM 100-6 Information Operations*, 1-1.

[74]*FM 100-6 Information Operations*, v.

The military has viewed information services (traditionally, intelligence and communications) as supporting inputs to the actual warfare functions of fire, maneuver, and strike. But information warfare might not always be a supporting function in some future campaigns, it might take a leading role. This makes it both increasingly important and challenging to get the organizational issue right. By 2015, the requirements of the battlefield will be such that traditional hierarchical command and control arrangements may be obsolete.[75]

Clearly, these statements support the necessity for making Information Warfare a Battlespace Function.

Even more important to employing information warfare in an offensive mode, the U.S. military must be prepared to defend our national interest from adversaries employing information warfare. Some of these concerns are already being researched by the military. The Army is currently studying the effects of computer viruses on its Army Tactical Command and Control System (ATTCCS) that serves as the technical core of battlefield operations.[76] Presently, the U.S. is ill prepared to handle a serious information warfare threat. The following are just a few examples of possible targets vulnerable to information warfare. Almost all military aircraft require satellite global positioning system (GPS) information in order to conduct routine navigation, data link transmission/reception, and targeting. An adversary with no air force could virtually ground all U.S. aircraft by either denying, degrading or destroying GPS information. Most satellites used for military applications, such as GPS, have no built in defense programs against computer viruses or any other form of attack. Imagine the crisis that would occur if a computer hacker were to disrupt, distort or degrade the Federal Reserve or the New York Stock Exchange. These are two simple examples of possibly hundreds of thousands of conceivable targets for information warfare. Duane Andrews, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense for C3I (Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence), said: "Our information security is atrocious, our operational security is atrocious, our communications security is atrocious."[77]

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[75]George Kraus, "Information Warfare," *Proceedings* Aug. 1995: 42. Mr. Kraus is a senior analyst in the Strategic Assessment Center of Science Applications International Corporation. He currently leads a multiyear study for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, focused on information warfare.

[76]Winn Schwartau, *Information Warfare* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1994) 254.

[77]Ibid.

Information warfare comprises many other areas. Public affairs or military/media relations is an extremely important component. *FM 100-6 Information Operations* stresses the importance of public affairs (PA): "PA is a battlefield function and has a direct impact on the conduct of operations. It must be fully integrated into the planning process, at all levels and across the full continuum of operations."[78] If information warfare, of which PA is a major component, is going to be integrated throughout all stages of the planning process it has to be made a Battlespace Function. The purpose of having Battlespace Functions is to identify the critical areas that military commanders at every level must plan and prepare for prior to any military operation. Public affairs is vital for establishing and maintaing the support of the American people for any military operation. Military leaders at all levels must have an effective public affairs plan or the support of the American can quickly dissipate.

Security Issues and New Technology

The complexity and number of security issues relating to information warfare is beyond the scope of this paper. However, there are some security issues that directly relate to military/media relations that require immediate attention. The most significant technological development is the merger of several technologies which gives us the ability to disseminate information in real time or near real time speed to millions of people throughout the world. Some of these technologies include satellite communications, digital technology, fiber optics and computer processors. The above mentioned technologies merge together to transmit information through the global network via cyberspace to over one hundred and twenty-five million computers world-wide.[79] Winn Schwartau's book, *Information Warfare*, defines the global network as: "the ability to connect any computer to any other computer or connect any person to any other person.[80] It is important to understand the "internet" and the global network are not the same: the "internet" is but one vehicle to travel the global network. He defines cyberspace

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[78]*FM 100-6 Information Operations*, 3-15.

[79]*Information Warfare*, 49.

[80]Ibid, 54.

as: "...that intangible place between computers where information momentarily exists on its route from one end of the global network to the other."[81] This information is transmitted electronically at the speed of light and can be disseminated by almost anyone to anyone else in any configuration from voice to video with little expense.

The global network and its associated technologies creates numerous security problems which directly relate to PA. DoD's "Statement of Principles: News Coverage of Combat" states that "The military believes that it must retain the option to review news material, to avoid the inadvertent inclusion in news reports of information that could endanger troop safety or the success of a mission."[82] The field commander's challenge of maintaining operational security is infinitely more difficult with the onset of the information age. Since reporters no longer require the use of government equipment to transmit copy or video to their news organizations, how does the military retain the ability to review their material for possible operational security violations? Additionally, a reporter can send video, voice, copy or data instantaneously to almost any where in the world for live broadcast. The military does not possess the capability to control or monitor the global network. A reporter can send information in almost any form to millions of people instantaneously with the simple click of a button. The following quote from the Strategic Studies Institute's book *Thinking Forward* highlights the problem of maintaining operational security: "Because of the pervasiveness of news media presence, the speed of technology, and the apparent inevitability of information leaks at the strategic level, traditional efforts at ensuring operational security are being overtaken by events beyond the control of commanders."[83]

Another major problem created by the global network is the ability for almost anyone to gain access to millions of people with virtually no limitations on what type of information or in what form the information is passed. As stated in the introduction to this paper, television news

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[81]Ibid, 49.
[82]See Appendix A.
[83]*Thinking Forward*, 23.

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media has a great deal of influence on public opinion by determining what bits of information the public will see and hear. As we continue to rapidly progress through the information age, more and more information will be passed through the global network and an ever increasing number of people will have access to both receive and transmit information through the global network.

New technology such as digital imagery, inables false visual images to be created and then transmitted throughout the world to millions of people. Any number of scenarios can be created by potential adversaries to influence both American and world opinion and subsequently influence military operations. America's future adversaries, having learned the lessons of Vietnam and Somalia, will vigorously fight to influence public opinion and that fight will take place in cyberspace!

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Military field commanders face new and difficult challenges from maintaining operational security to dealing with a more demanding and technologically advanced news media. Handling these challenges will require military leaders at every level to integrate news media planning at all levels of planning. A failure to properly integrate and coordinate with news media organizations can lead to the compromise of national security, operational security, and the deterioration of public trust and confidence. Any of these failures would degrade military operations and could result in the loss of American lives.

Public opinion is a strategic "center of gravity" for the United States and potential adversaries can and will utilize information warfare to influence public opinion in an attempt to degrade U.S. military operations. As a result, future battles will not just take place on the battlefield. Military leaders must be prepared to attack and defend through cyberspace as well as television/radio broadcasts and all forms of print media. *Joint Vision 2010* states the challenge posed by information warfare.

> There should be no misunderstanding that our effort to achieve and maintain information superiority will also invite resourceful enemy attacks on our information systems. Defensive information warfare to protect our ability to conduct information operations will be one of our biggest challenges in the period ahead.[84]

Many of our current information systems, including satellites, communications equipment and computer links, are crucial for military operations but were not designed to defend against information warfare. Some of the information provided by these systems include everything from global positioning information to a variety of intelligence products. Additionally, many military computer systems utilize public phone lines for transmission and dissemination of information since public phone lines are not secure these systems are extremely

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[84]CJCS, *Joint Vision 2010* (Washington: GPO, 1997) 16.

vulnerable to attack. The ability to disrupt, destroy or alter military data bases poses a severe threat to the national security of the United States.

Due to the rapid increases in communications technology such as data links, satellite uplinks, and digital imagery, it is no longer practical nor possible for field commanders to conduct security reviews of reporter's video or copy. Therefore security reviews are no longer a practical means to maintain operational security or prevent the compromise of sensitive or classified information. The question then becomes how does the military prevent the compromise of sensitive information while keeping the American people informed. The answer to that question is difficult considering the competitive pressures reporters and news organizations face to present information that is unique and interesting. One possible solution is to send reporters to individual units as quickly as possible before the start of any military operation. Allowing the reporters to interact freely with the soldiers of the unit would serve several purposes. First, it would allow the reporter to develop a greater understanding of the roles and missions of the unit as well as help educate the reporter on military culture. Second, since the same reporter will follow the unit into combat operations it helps ensure compliance with the rules established to maintain operational security. Lastly, it ensures the integration and cooperation between the military and the media from the initial planning stages through combat operations and peace negotiations.

One of the recommendations from the After Action Report following Somalia was the integration of reporters into company and platoon size units.

> The media and the Marine Corps continue to achieve the best results when journalists spend significant amounts of time with Marine units at the company and platoon level. This results in more accurate reporting, enhanced safety and security for the Marines and journalists, and mutual respect.
> If a journalist wants to cover an upcoming operation, the best approach is for him to join a unit days before the operation and remain with that same unit throughout.[85]

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[85]Deputy, I MEF Forward After Action Report for Task Force Mogadishu, dated 31 Jan. 93.

Information warfare has progressed and possess a significant threat to any military operation where it has not been carefully planned for and defended against. Cyberspace and the global network are the battlefields of the future. The military needs to change its doctrine on how we view information warfare. It can no longer be considered a supporting element of intelligence, or command and control but rather an independent battlespace. With the ever increasing role of the media and the speed at which information is delivered, public affairs or military/media relations play an important role in information warfare. FM 100-5 Operations cites:

> ...the impact of media coverage can dramatically affect strategic direction and the range of military operations. Clearly, the effect of written, and more importantly, visual information displayed by U.S. and international news organizations directly and rapidly influenced the nature of U.S. and international policy objectives and our use of military force in Rwanda, Somalia and in the former Yugoslavian Republic."[86]

 A failure to place the proper emphasis on public affairs and information warfare leaves the U.S. military and national security vulnerable to attack from future adversaries.

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[86]*FM 100-5 Operations*, 1-3.

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES: NEWS COVERAGE OF COMBAT

The following principles have been adopted by representatives of major American news media and the Pentagon to be followed in any future combat situation involving American troops.

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Principles that should govern future arrangements for news coverage from the battlefield of the United States military in combat:

1. Open and independent reporting will be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.

2. Pools are not to serve as the standard of covering U.S. military operations. But pools may sometimes provide the only feasible means of early access to a military operation. Pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity--within 24 to 36 hours when possible. The arrival of early-access pools will not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.

3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited.

4. Journalists in a combat zone will be credentialed by the U.S. military and will be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules can result in suspensions of the credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations will make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.

5. Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special Operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.

6. Military public affairs officers should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process.

7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders will permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools.

8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military will supply PAOs with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and will make these facilities available whenever possible for filing independent coverage. In cases when government facilities are unavailable, journalists will, as always, file by any other means available. The military will not

ban communications systems operated by new organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing DoD National Media Pool System.

Accompanying Statement on Security Review

Note: The news organizations originally proposed 10 principles. One dealt with security review and said: "News material--words and pictures--will not be subject to security review." The Pentagon proposed instead a principle that said: "Military operational security may require review of news material for conformance to reporting ground rules." This fundamental disagreement could not be bridged, and representatives of the press and the military issued their separate views on this matters a, as follows.

News Media Statement

The news organizations are convinced that journalists covering U.S. forces in combat must be mindful at all times of operational security and the safety of American lives. News organizations strongly believe that journalists will abide by clear operational security ground rules. Prior security review is unwarranted and unnecessary.

We believe that the record in Operation Desert Storm, Vietnam and other wars supports the conclusion that journalists in the battlefield can be trusted to act responsible.

We will challenge prior security review in the even that the Pentagon attempts to impose it in some future military operation.

Department of Defense Statement

The military believes that it must retain the option to review news material, to avoid the inadvertent inclusion in news reports of information that could endanger troop safety or the success of a mission.

Any review system would be imposed only when operational security is a consideration-for example, the very early stages of a contingency operation or sensitive periods in combat. If security review were imposed, it would be used for one very limited purpose: to prevent disclosure of information which, if published, would jeopardize troop safety or the success of a military operation. such a review system would not be used to seek alterations in any other aspect of content or to delay timely transmission of new material.

Security review would be performed by the military in the field, giving the commander's representative the opportunity to address potential ground rule violations. the reporter would either change the story to meet ground rule concerns and file it, or file it and flag for the editor whatever passages were in dispute. The editor would then call the Pentagon to give the military one last chance to talk about potential ground rule violations.

The Defense Department believes that the advantage of this system is that the news organizations would retain control of the material throughout the review and filing process. The Pentagon would have two chances to address potential operational security violations, but the news organization would make the final decision about whether to publish the disputed

information. Under Principle Four, violations of the ground rules could result in expulsion of the journalist involved form the combat zone.

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